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A
LETTER
FROM
LEGHORN,

March the Twenty Foureth, 1697.

FROM
On Board the *Brittania*.

SIR,

A Frer my most hearty Thanks for the Present of those Delicious Wines of *Monte-Christo* you sent me, with which several Friends of yours, and my self, frequently drink your Health. I know you will be not a little solicitous, to know the present State of our *Ship*, which according to my little Know-

ledge of so great a Body, is at present thus:

You remember after our late *Captain* had deserted us, and went over to the *Algerines*, by unanimous Consent of the *Ships Crew*, (a few *Malabar* *Tarpanlins* only excepted) we chose the *Master of the Baravia* to succeed him, who has given us all the Assurances of

A

a Brave

A Brave and Generous Commander: You have heard of his last Summers Actions on Board the *Hibernia*, who is now almost forc'd to her Obedience, and to strike Sail to the *Britania*, tho' some few *Mahometans*, who lye skulking in holes of the Ship, do sometimes appear upon Deck, but our Men do often kill 'em, and throw 'em over-board: The *Lieutenant* was kill'd last Summer by a Shot in the Neck, and our *Captain* himself receiv'd a slight Wound on the Shoulder, but we hope in a little time, to give a very good Account of that Ship, the Round-house, the Great Cabin, the Storage and Gun Room being entirely in the *Christians Hands*; and the Ships Crew are continually between Decks, to find out the lurking *Mahometans*..

Our *Captain*, In *January* last, went on Board the *Batavia*, a Vessel lying at Anchor, some few Leagues from our Ship, to discourse with several other *Captains & Lieutenants* (who there make their Rendezvous) about the State of the War with the *Algerines*, this approaching Summer, who are now grown to a very considerable degree of Insolence, and bid defiance to all the Ships in the *Mediterranean*; but their several Breaches of Faith, and their frequent Cruelties, have render'd them very odious to all the *Christian Vessels*, now riding in these Seas: It must yet be confessed, they are a very politick sort of People, and by Means of their *Barbary Gold*, get Intelligence of almost all the Actions and Intentions of the *Christians*,

who have a numerous Company of *Renegades* amongst them; who, though they do not openly profess the *Mahometan Creed*, yet are believ'd to be *Mus-selmans* in their Hearts; besides, their fixt Belief of *Fatality* emboldens the *Algerines* in their *Barbarities*, and interpreting every Action by its Success, they upon every prosperous Event, push their good Fortune on, and are the more Resolute and Daring, because they believe every Mans Fate to be wrote in his Fore-head.

You have heard, I presume, Sir, of the Villainous Actions of one of our *Fore-mast Men* (a Fellow that used to sell Brandy to some of the Sailers) who was seen to swim on Board the *Algerine Fleet* when near this Port; he was taken and Tryed, and making but a pitifal Defence for himself, a convenient Halter soon finish'd the Life of poor *Godfrey*.

The most Remarkable Occurrence that lately happen'd, was of three of our Passengers, the one of *Quality*, and the two other *Gentlemen of Fortune*, who being Well-wishers to the *Algerine Interest*, contrived in a little *Felucca* they had hired for that Purpose, to go to *Algiers* in the Night; their Design succeeded so far, that they got off, and were gone some Miles at Sea, but our *Secretary* soon smook'd the Design, and sent one or two of our ablest Sailers in the Long Boat after 'em; they quickly found 'em, and searching the Sparks, found a Bundle of Letters, with Lead affix to the Bag that kept them; up-
on

on the Seizure of which, they endeavour'd by large Promises, and insinuating Wheedles, to have perswaded our Boys to have thrown them overboard; but being honest trusty Lads they refus'd it, and bringing them back they were committed to the *Fire Castle*, and examin'd; two of them receiv'd sentence of death, and one of them was hang'd at the Yard Arm, to the great grief of those in our Ship, who are favourers of the *Mahometan Interest*; the Copy of his Speech they got printed at the port, and value it as highly as the *Alcoran*, and what ever esteem he may have with others, with them he passes for a true believer, and is believ'd to be gone directly to paradise.

The *Captains Lady* (who by Consent) Governs the Vessel in his Absence; is a Woman of Extraordinary Conduct; Nature has furnish'd Her with a Thousand Charms, both of body and mind; so that Her very Enemies are forced to own Her to be a Lady fit to Rule; and which is yet more strange, so wisely does She steer the Ship, that all the Mariners on Board, confess with an Unanimous Consent, that She has a Soul purely Masculine, and justly Claims the most exalted Respect from all, who are Spectators of her wise Management.

The *Mahometans* on Board, tho' not countenanced, nor put into places of trust, yet while they behave themselves quietly, enjoy the private Exercise of their Religion, but the most pernicious

Creatures amongst us are a sort of *Mongrell Christians*, who bear an equal respect both to the Cross, and the *Half-Moon*; they are continually in some private places of the Ship forming projects to restore our late *Captain* to his post again, and frequently drink his health, and to his safe return to the *Brittania*, but in such odd, and Ambiguous Terms, that their words have a double meaning, and since the knowledge of the intention is hid from Humane Cognizance, by their ingenuous salvo's, they keep themselves within the intrenchments of their own thoughts, the want of which Equivocation, would often expose them to the ill Usage of the *Bilboes*, or the severe Discipline of the *Castern*.

We have a Numerous Company of the *Clergy* on Board, who have the charge of the Souls Health of those in the Ship; yet the *Chief Head* of their number with some few others, refuse in their publick Devotions to pray for the present Governours of our Ship; yet take it for a most Abusive Affront, if any one should but express a thought that they were friends to the *Algerines*, nevertheless their Actions plainly tend to that interest; some of the *Tarpanians* likewise (influenc'd by them) appear friends to their perswasion, but their number is so inconsiderable, that the Wiser Heads at the *Helm* are no ways afraid of them.

We just now receiv'd advice, that the *Algerines* in great Numbers had Attac'd a large Vessel of the *Spaniards*, called

called the *Mimosa*, now in Confed-
eracy with the rest in this Harbour,
may make some show of a Vigorous
Onset, but the Vessel, tho' not half
so big, is believ'd will make a very
bold defence, by reason their *Lieutenant*
is a very Stout Commander: 'Tis re-
ported our *Captain* will go from the

Battery, to Oppose the Enemy; and
there are some whispers, that the *In-*
fants have already quitted their pre-
tences: but the certainty of this re-
port with some other Remarkable pas-
sages of our Ship, you may expect to
hear suddenly, from,

SIR,

Your Servant

W. M.

Licensed March the Nintenth, 1691.

LONDON, Printed for L. C. 1691.